

BLADE

OF THE IMMORTAL

art and story by

HIROAKI SAMURA



CAST OF CHARACTERS



yumeko

Depend not totally on me
Or I will kill you



yamaoka

Not enough to
show the world
Thanks BTW

THE STORY SO FAR

- Series: Blade of the Immortal
- Date: 2007 05.06
- Volume: 111
- Chapter: 876
- Format: Left to Right
- pages: 48 / 27 CM (page released)
- Size: 3.0x4.5 (4.5x6.5 large should I go to 1000px? Comments?)
- Genre: Dark Shounen Monthly Issues (IPC: 400000000)
- Last File: Final v01c04-c13 end vol.

I have no idea where the TIFs left off so I'll start with July issue. I'll either work backwards or just continue from here. If someone lets me know where it left off maybe I'll go back and start from there myself. Anyways the best time to catch up is when I just enter the channel, if not I may not be at the computer.



BLADE

OF THE IMMORTAL

art and story by

HIROAKI SAMURA

translation by

DANA LEWIS and TOREN SMITH

lettering and retouch by

TOMOKO SAITO



CAST OF CHARACTERS



MANJI

Immortal assassin



RIN

Last heir of the
Mitsunishi-ryū dojo
destroyed by 100-ryū



MINGANA

Former 100-ryū
member



ASUKA

Formerly wanted
Manji assassin

THE STORY SO FAR

Infered by hisseichū, mystical bloodsuckers which can heal all wounds and grant their host immortality. Manji's bloodlines led to the capture and murder of his sister. To avenge for the 100-good people who died at his hand under his corrupted lord, Manji vowed to slay 1,000 evil men in exchange for the release of death.

Two years earlier, when her parents were murdered on her fourteenth birthday by Asuka Kagabara's 100-ryū revolution. Rin Asuka became part of a mad revenge cycle which began when Asuka's grandfather was driven out of the Asuka clan. Mitsunishi-ryū dojo fifty years before. A quest for vengeance was instilled in Asuka, a smaller quest now haunts Rin. Upon learning

of his life, she enlisted his aid to destroy the 100-ryū and avenge her parents.

Last Issue

Manji and Mingana and Rin have all been surviving to Manji. Rin is looking for Asuka. Manji is chasing Rin, and Mingana was hunting for her grandfather's killer. Now Rin, the killer, is dead, two hands and presumably at the bottom of a cliff, and everyone else is on their way toward Asuka. Mitsunishi. Asuka is busy taking over another sword school, and this time it's different... it won't be long that takes this school. This time, it's a girl but!



designer **DENJI KANEY** assistant editor **MICHAEL CARRINGTON** editor **DAVE EPTON-GORE** publisher **MARK BROWARDSON**

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無限の佳人



THE WIND AND THE HERON







I'LL GET EVERY
WENTSE
LATER.

THIS IS A
"TEA HOUSE"
DISTRICT.
IT'S CALLED
ANAKIWA.



IT'S THE
MOST
POPULAR OF
THE THREE
TEA HOUSE
DISTRICTS
IN KAMAZAWA.

I'VE SEEN
BOYS FROM
THE JOKUO DOWN
HERE SOMETIME.
HA, HELL, LET ME
TELL YOU THIS KNOW,
HE'D JUST A
BLOOD
VESSEL.



LET'S
START
BACK,
HISOKA.

YOU'VE
SEEN
WALKING
TOO LONG
IN THIS
CROWD.



PLEASE
WAIT HERE,
I'LL GET
A SALAM-
SLIP.

E-BUY...
ACTUALLY,
I'M
STILL...



I...
I'M
SORRY...



DO YOU
REMEMBER
WHEN WE
FIRST MET
ANOTSU-KAKU?
HERE AT
THIS SPOT?

YES. I
REMEMBER
IT VERY
WELL
INDEED.



I
THOUGHT...

I FELT
SOMEBODY
NEARBY, AND
DROPPED INTO THE
WOODS. THAT WALL
OF DARK, DARK
GREEN... ALMOST
BLACK. AND WHEN
IT OPENED IN
FRONT OF ME...

...THERE
YOU WERE
ON THAT
ROCK, BATHED
IN LIGHT, LIKE
SOMETHING
FROM
ANOTHER
WORLD.

I
THOUGHT
YOU
WERE...



A
HEROIN
PERHAPS...



AREN'T
A
HEROIN BY
THE
WAY



DOES THE
SPRING
WATER
HELP YOUR
STOMACH?



NO,
BUT MY
STEP-
FATHER
SAYS TO
DO IT.

SO...
.....
.....



I KNOW
IT'S JUST
BALM
FOR MY
SOUL...

THE
MEDICINES
I HAVE TO
TAKE TO LIVE
ARE STEALING MY
VISION, DAY BY
DAY. WASHING
MY EYES CAN'T
BRING IT BACK.



BUT
YOU
WERE ALL
ALONE
THAT
DAY.

ISN'T
THAT
DANGEROUS?
WHAT IF
SOMETHING
HAPPEN-
ED...?



OH, I
TRY NOT
TO LET IT
AFFECT MY
DAILY
LIFE...
NOT
OFTEN.

FOR
EXAMPLE,
I CAN
HANDLE
STARS WITH-
OUT HELP,
BOTH UP
AND
DOWN.



AND
SINCE I'VE
KNOWN MY
STEPFATHER
AND HIS
STUDENTS
SO LONG...

...I
CAN TELL
THEM ALL
APART. THEIR
SILHOUETTES,
MAYBE
OR JUST,
THEIR
FEEL.



AND
YET...

WHEN I
MET YOU
WITH
KENSUKE-JOHN,
YOU KNOW IT
WAS I
WHO MET
YOU HERE.

YES,
WELL...
THAT
WAS AN
UNUSUAL
SITUA-
TION.



IT WAS BECAUSE
YOU WERE
SUCH A
STRIKING,
BEAUTIFULLY
DYED
HERON.



THAT'S
HOW I
REMEMBERED.

IF I
WAS A
HERON...
THEN
YOU...



...YOU
WERE LIKE
A GUST
OF WIND,
STIRRING
THE
TREES.



BEARING
THIS
HERON TO
THE SKY...









SUCH
TERRIBLE
SWEETNESS...

IT
MIGHT
COME
DOWN
EVEN
FET...?



HUH?!

OH
LIL
TART...

I HEARD KENJI
DISCIPLINE
ALL OF YOU
AFTER-
WARDS.



I'M SO
SORRY.
HE'S EVEN
HARDER
THAN
MY
FATHER.

FORGET
IT!
IT'S N-
NOTHING!

O-CAN'T
CALL
MYSELF A
SHAMURA
IF THAT
BOthers
ME, RIGHT?



BUT
MAYBE
I'LL
TEACH
YOU...

...NOT
TO BE
SO AWESOME
NEXT
TIME,
PERHAPS?



Y-
YES
MA'AM.



THIS
IS FAR
ENOUGH,
THANK
YOU.

AH-
OKAY!

SEE YOU
TOMORROW.









YES, SR.
NO
PROBLEM.

HERE IN
KAGA,
PROBABLY.
OR AT VERY
LEAST,
SOMEWHERE
IN HIDA.

YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO TAKE
EXTRA TIME
ON IT. JUST
ASK ALONG
THE WAY.



IF YOU
GET ALL
THE WAY TO
EGG WITHOUT
ANY LEADS,
SO BE IT.
YOUR SILENCE
WILL BE THE
MESSAGE.

HOWEVER,
IF YOU'RE
SUCCESSFUL,
I WANT YOU
TO COME
BACK HERE
AND TELL ME.
SORRY.



YES,
SR.

WHAT-
EVER YOU
WISH.
SO...WHO
IS IT?

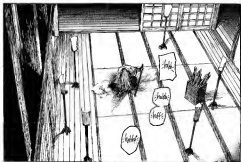


HER
NAME
IS...

...OTONO-
TACHIBANA
MAKIE.









BEFORE
THEN,
I MAKE
HIM
FIGHT
ME AGAIN...

I'VE
STILL
GOT SOME
TIME
BEFORE
THE
BASTARD
LEAVES.



I JUST
GOTTA **WINNY**
RIGHT?
NO **WTF?**
I LET THAT
FLAKE LAST
TIME DECIDE
IT ALL!

THIS
TIME,
BY
GOD...



...I'LL
KILL
THAT--



??
MASTER
ATENDU...?





FORGET
IT, IT'S
NOTHING.
I DON'T WORK
OUT ALL DAY
LIKE MY
STUDENTS.





LETTERS

Vol. 2, Issue 12

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GLOSSARY

epil. A small sword



Hello, dear readers. Ah, love. It's in the air. It's everywhere! It's spring, and summer will soon be with us. But before the heat sets in... let's just enjoy this thing called love, shall we? Okay, maybe just some of us. Possible, possible, possible. Maybe it's time to shut the old trap and let someone else do the talking. Especially when it's this kind of talking...

Thank you DH and SF for bringing to us BOI. It has even become my favorite comic of all time, and Hiroaki Samura's my favorite artist of all time. And damn to be: I absolutely love it to death. Samura's storytelling ability, his sense, their explosion art, and the depth of the characters is far beyond perfection. OK, I know this is getting way too mushy for its own good, but I never tire of re-reading any of them. I can't wait till the next graphic novel and know-how and I'll be sure I finish it by year. Seriously, I wanted to thank you for bringing such an amazing story to the west.

And now a question which I'm sure I know the answer to: Is there anyone of standing here, mail to Hiroaki Samura? I would love to be able to congratulate him personally. Is it there is anyone I would send stuff please could you all wait?

Patrick in the UK
via e-mail

Thanks for the glowing letter Patrick. And because you so much loved because you're from the UK, I'll let you spell "samurai" in that charming British way. Angham. I don't know if we can actually get your letters to Samura sensei, and even if we get it. I don't know if he can read English. Heck I don't know much, if sensei. Anyway, your kind let it to a mail to and we can forward it. Otherwise we'd have to pay all that postage to forward it... but you know where your passion is getting to him already. He gets copies of every issue of Blade of the Immortal, and if I know him enough matters are, he probably takes a close look at it to make sure we're not messing up too much. Of course I still don't know if he reads English.

Until he

Oh, hello to Nick, and I see how Canon. I've been meaning to write to you for a long time now, but I guess



From right to left: your secret admirer, Nick, Chris, and the... Hiroaki Samura in the background, and Hiroaki Sensei Samura in the foreground.

sometimes is as good as anytime, right? I have read so many good words in your letter, which that it is difficult to say something new. Although I do. Samura's work would definitely inspire some good words from anybody. I am a big fan, really, and I think of myself as kind of an artist so I have to say that I pay my respects to a wonderful storyteller. I think Mr. Samura does that thing exactly: he tells a story, and he does so in a way no other artist in the comic book world does today. His panels are so alive you can almost listen to the birds, the chatter of people in a market. You can almost see colors in the landscape.

I would really like to see his work: his methods, his tools. How he gives life to his. And of course I can only admire his character and the way he portrays real people in a world, so old yet so close to our own time. I can only wish his readers on with his fantastic work so we can cherish every panel again and again.

Nick "Dovah" Dovahkrisna Gresson
via e-mail

Thanks "Dovah." As it is often, we're reading another international letter column. Ever since I started taking a closer look at the readership of Blade of the Immortal, it's become increasingly obvious that fans span the globe. It's really quite phenomenal. Speaking of which, I hope you all realize that when a letter equals a big thing, it's usually because it's not written in someone's first

language. Sometimes the letters undergo strong shifts, but I try to keep that extra flavor in there.

Hey, check this out. It's getting to be convention season, so I thought I'd show you a couple of Photo fans and give you an idea of how far their big shows can be. There are always people dressing up as their fave manga and anime characters (just to mention Star Wars, Star Trek, etc.), but Black fans dressing up is a bit of a rarity. However, these two young ladies, Addi Chastripe and Jessica Reed,

brought their fandom and their sweet outfits to the International Convention in San Diego. They're standing next to former politician and current editor (and above my wife) Shuwan Ervin-Goss. Notice those outfits? Yep, it's Kim and Ittysabito, two characters worthy of fan worship. Anyway, it took me forever to run this photo. Sorry about that, Addi and Jessica. Hope to see you in San Diego again this year.

— Tim02

ABOUT THE SWASTIKA

The main character in *Blade of the Immortal* Musashi has taken the "cross geminata" as both his name and his personal symbol. This symbol is also known as the swastika — a name derived from the Sanskrit *svastika* (meaning "wellness," from *su* — "well" + *asti* "he is"). As a symbol of prosperity

and good fortune, the swastika was widely used throughout the ancient world (for example, appearing often on Mesopotamian coins), including North and South America and has been used in Japan as a symbol of Buddhism since ancient times. To be precise, the symbol generally used by Japanese Buddhists is the *swastika* which moves in a counter

clockwise direction, and is called the *manji* in Japanese. The *swastika* generally stands for right and often for magical practices. The *swastika*, whose main point is a clockwise direction, is generally considered a *nausea* symbol. It was this version (the *swastika*) that was persecuted by the Nazis. It is important that readers understand that the *swastika* has ancient and honorable origins and it is those that apply to this story which takes place in the 16th century (ca. 1583-4). There is no real *Swastika* or *pro-Nazi* meaning behind the use of the symbol in this story. Those meanings did not arise until after 1910.

ABOUT THE TRANSLATION

The Artwork: The author of *Blade of the Immortal* requested that we make an effort to avoid mirror imaging his artwork. Normally, all of our manga are first copied as a mirror image in order to facilitate the left-to-right reading of the pages. However, Mr. Sano decided that he would rather see his pages reversed via the technique of cutting up the panels and rejoining them in reverse order. While we feel that this often leads

to problems in panel-to-panel continuity, we place primary importance on the wishes of the creator. Therefore, most of *Blade of the Immortal* has been produced using the "cut and paste" technique. These bits of artwork were required to where it was impossible to do this, and mirror imaged panels in pages were used instead.

The Second Effects in Dialogue: Since some of Mr. Sano's second effects are "lingual" parts of the artwork, the decision was made to leave those in their original Japanese. When it was crucial to the understanding of the panel that the second effect be in English, however, Mr. Sano chose to mirror the panel. We hope readers will view the unmirrored second effects as essential portions of Mr. Sano's extraordinary artwork. In addition, Mr. Sano's treatment of dialogue is quite different from that found in average samurai manga and is considered to be one of the things that has made *Blade* such a huge hit in Japan. Mr. Sano has mixed a variety of linguistic styles in this fantasy story where some characters speak in the grammatical style of old Japan, while others speak as if they were street-smart punks from a bad area of modern day Tokyo. The anachronistic slang used by some of the characters in the English translation refers to the unusual mix of speech patterns from the original Japanese text.



NEXT ISSUE:
"Curry House"